

1943

A student harvest-work program at West Springfield (Mass.) High School : September & October 1942.

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University of Massachusetts Amherst

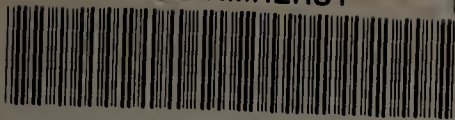
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A STUDENT HARVEST WORK PROGRAM
AT WEST SPRINGFIELD (MASS.) HIGH SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 1942

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A STUDENT HARVEST-WORK PROGRAM AT WEST SPRINGFIELD (MASS.)
HIGH SCHOOL - SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 1942

By

Herbert Franklin Bartlett

Problem submitted for degree of
Master of Science
Massachusetts State College, Amherst
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A STUDENT HARVEST-WORK PROGRAM AT WEST SPRINGFIELD (MASS.)
HIGH SCHOOL - SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 1942

Introduction

Very soon after school opened on September 9, 1942, it became apparent to the Vocational Agriculture Instructor that with the opening of school a large number of students were taken from farm jobs. This, in addition to the previous shortage of farm help, created a critical help shortage on farms, and the help of students was necessary to harvest the crops. This was usually done by adults on the farms, but they were not there this fall. "Agriculture, with the help of the weather but without the help of more workers than it had a year ago, was able to increase production substantially in 1942 by utilizing types of labor usually not in the farm labor force and by employing laborers more days per week and more hours per day. But now we are beginning to scrape the bottom of the barrel on the farm labor supply and it appears that to have sufficient farm labor next year will require more ingenuity not only on the part of farmer employers but also on the part of government.

"If present trends continue, agriculture probably will lose a million workers from its labor force between July 1, 1942 and July 1, 1943. By October 1, 1943, at the end of the harvest season, the prospective loss will amount to 1,300,000 workers. At the same time, needed agricultural production next year would require 200,000 more workers than were available in 1942. To meet these needs to the full, next year we would have to recruit one and a half million new workers.

"Perhaps public action can be taken to relieve some of the need for new workers. However, if agriculture has to recruit this many new workers, most of the likely sources are the following groups: (1) 250,000 farm boys

reaching the working age of 14 years, in excess of deaths among men in the work force; (2) 50,000 reduction in unemployment on farms, mostly of older men and physically handicapped persons; (3) 700,000 more women to be employed, half of them to replace women already working in agriculture who will migrate into non-agricultural work and the other half as a net addition to the number of women working on farms; (4) 100,000 more non-agricultural workers who live on farms, to perform farm work in addition to carrying on their usual occupations; (5) 100,000 more children under 14 years of age; (6) 300,000 increase in town and city residents who work in agriculture.....

"Governmental policies with respect to recruitment, deferment, transportation, housing, training, and wage rates for farm labor, setting and distributing production goals, and with respect to manpower allocation will all have an important effect on the farm labor situation in 1943. Specific details of many of these policies are now being developed. Nevertheless, one of the most important factors in the farm labor situation in 1943 will be the extent to which farmers organize for the efficient utilization of agricultural workers and of other persons in their localities who can be made available for seasonal farm work." *

The local shortage was noted on farms in Chicopee, Springfield, Feeding Hills, and West Springfield.

An effort to secure farm help had been carried on by the United States Employment Service in Springfield, Massachusetts, and students were released part time from Wilbraham Academy, Wilbraham, Massachusetts. Students at the high school in Middleboro, Massachusetts, were being used for farm work, and in the spring of 1942 some students from West Springfield High School had been used along with a few from the West Springfield Junior High School.

A Program For West Springfield

Survey of
Situation
(Monday)

The Agriculture Instructor at West Springfield owns and operates a fruit and poultry farm in West Springfield, and an effort on the part of the Instructor to organize a picking crew on the first Thursday and Friday after school opened, September 10 and 11, for work on Saturday, met with no success. As a teacher in the high school, he was in a very favorable position to locate a supply of help, but his being unable to secure the help, brought out the necessity, in the mind of the Instructor, of making some concerted effort to get help which, if he needed and couldn't get, probably other farmers needed and couldn't get. So, on Monday, September 14, personal visits were made by the Instructor to the larger farms in West Springfield, including fruit, dairy, potato and market garden, to discover the exact help situation.

In talking to the various farmers in town, no mention was made, at first, of the purpose of the visit, so as to get an unbiased opinion from the farmers as to the help situation. In almost every instance, however, the farmer was quick to admit that help was needed immediately and in numbers sufficient and constant enough to harvest the crops. After this was admitted, the Instructor told each farmer that if the students would agree to help harvest the crops, he could be reasonably sure that the school authorities would see to it that the school program would be changed to meet the situation. At this time it was also agreed by the Instructor and the farmer that safe transportation to and from work would be provided, that constant employment would be given until the crop was harvested, and that a minimum wage of 25 cents per hour would be guaranteed the worker.

Action
(Tuesday)

On Tuesday, September 15, the gravity of the situation was called to the attention of Superintendent Dr. F. P. Hawkes who called a conference for Tuesday P.M., September 15, of High School

Principal, W. A. Cowing, Vocational Guidance and Placement Director, William Valdina, Vocational Agriculture Instructor, Herbert F. Bartlett, and himself, at which time plans were made to revise the high school schedule for one month to allow students to help in harvest work. This schedule revision provided that each day have the full number of class periods but that each period be shortened from 43 minutes to 30 minutes so that school would close at 12:30 P.M. instead of 1:45 P.M. In this way, all students would cover the same amount of work and no ground would be lost by some students being out at work while others were in school.

On the Form shown below, a preliminary survey of the working status of high school students was made on Tuesday, September 15.

Form I - Preliminary working status survey

WEST SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL
WEST SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

AMERICAN YOUTH PLEDGES AID FOR VICTORY.

HELP THE WAR EFFORT

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

1. Are you now employed regularly after school? Yes _____
No _____

2. If not employed after school at present, Yes _____
would you be willing to do work vital to No _____
the war effort?

3. Are you willing to help gather in the Yes _____
HARVEST during the next four weeks? No _____

I pledge: To fight on the home front by participating in the vital
tasks that can be done by the youth of America.

Signature _____

This survey disclosed that 50% of the high school students were already working at some kind of a job.

Plan pre-
sented and
started
(Wednesday)

On Wednesday, September 16, the proposed revised plan was presented to the high school student body at a general assembly. At a previous conference between the Vocational Agriculture Instructor and the Superintendent, it was decided that the correct psychological approach and presentation of the matter was of utmost importance. Superintendent Hawkes is an accomplished public speaker, and his presentation of the proposed plan was ideal. He called the attention of the student body to the fact that only a week or two previously, a former West Springfield High School student, George Trowbridge, had been killed in action over seas. George had given his full time and his life to the war effort. Dr. Hawkes then reminded the student body that the survey of student work activity (Form I) showed that about 50% of the student body was working. Then he asked, quite frankly, what about the remaining 50% who weren't working? The development of the appeal was now at a point where the non-working students couldn't very well refuse to volunteer for work.

Immediately after the assembly the students who had agreed to work on farms were asked to remain to be assigned to the various farms for the next day. At this time the Instructor pointed out to the prospective workers their moral obligations to the farmer, such as carefulness, dependability, honesty, in order to make the program a success. They were told to wear old clothes to allow them to work freely and without thought of getting them soiled; to remember that they were inexperienced and would have to accept a certain amount of "riding" from the regular help; to give the job a fair trial before condemning either the job, the employer or the Instructor; to remember that accidents can happen on a farm and to be as careful as possible to prevent any accidents. Mention was made of some common accidents that might occur, such as, slivers from baskets and boxes, cuts from corn leaves and corn knives, falling from a truck or a wagon by a quick start,

fall from a poorly placed ladder, strain from improper lifting of bags or boxes of produce. The students were advised constantly to keep these things in mind and to try to avoid injury.

The Vocational Agriculture Instructor called for certain types of workers for certain jobs. For example, nine husky boys were wanted for a silo-filling crew. These volunteered, were put in one group, and were told to bring their work clothes to school with them the next day. A market gardener wanted a group of twenty girls to pick beans. It was quickly discovered that most of the girls volunteering for this group belonged to a school club, and that worked out very well. Other small groups were discovered, and by keeping these girls in their groups, they enjoyed working together as pals. Usually certain girls wanted to work with certain others, and this was allowed as far as possible.

Previously, certain teachers had been asked to help in launching the program, and to facilitate locating special groups in front of the school the next day, and the various groups of students were asked to report to a designated teacher. Thus, when farmer Brown arrived and wanted his twenty girls, the Vocational Agriculture Instructor had merely to locate the teacher in charge of that group, the teacher having previously seen that this group was all together. This seemed to be a satisfactory way of getting the students off to their respective jobs. Also, an order from the various farmers was received Wednesday, September 16, as to the number of workers actually needed.

Off to work
(Thursday) The conditions outside of high school right after dismissal were new and inspiring. Enthusiasm among the workers ran high, and the sight of the crowd of students in working clothes, mostly overalls and slacks, was something new to the public eye.

Farmers were instructed to have their trucks at the school promptly at 12:30 on Thursday. When they came, the Agriculture Instructor located the teacher in charge of certain groups and saw that these groups got off with the right man. Before the farmer left with his workers, the workers were cautioned against fooling while on the truck so as to avoid accidents. When the Instructor first arranged with the farmer for workers, the matter of safety in transportation had been stressed.

Once a student or group of students was turned over to an employer, it was understood by both parties that all future arrangements as to wages, hours, transportation, and all details of further employment must be taken care of between the employer and the student worker. The Instructor was to be involved only for replacements and matters of arbitration.

Later Thursday afternoon Superintendent Hawkes and the Vocational Agriculture Instructor visited several farms to observe the working of the program, and at that time it appeared to be progressing in a satisfactory manner. Thursday night's papers carried very favorable and ample publicity of the program. The story was written by a reporter who contacted Superintendent Hawkes, the Instructor, and several employers.

In order that interested townspeople, who were not familiar with the program, might know the procedure used, the Form shown below was issued to authorize the student to be out of school in the afternoon.

Form 2 - Student work permit

<u>WEST SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS</u>	
	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 80%;"></div> Date
<p>To Whom It May Concern:--</p> <p>_____ , a Student in the _____ School, West Springfield, Massachusetts, has permission granted by the Superintendent of Schools to work temporarily on various farms and market gardens on school days from _____ o'clock and other times when school is not in session. This permission is given because of the urgent need of farm labor at the present time and is temporary, subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Schools. This form serves as a temporary working card.</p>	
<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 80%;"></div> Principal	

A sample day of the plan (Friday) The Vocational Agriculture Instructor had his own telephone, and quite early Friday morning, September 18, the second day of the program, requests for help from outside of West Springfield were 'phoned in. When these calls arrived early enough in the morning, it was possible to secure a crew for that afternoon. Calls for help coming in too late in the day, that is, after 11:30 A.M., were put over until the following day. Calls were received nearly every day, either for new crews or for adjustments of crews already assigned.

Each day it was necessary for the Instructor to see which of the working pupils were absent and to check the lists of the various crews to see that a full crew was on hand for the day for each farmer. Almost every day substitutes had to be located to make full crews. Fortunately there were more workers registered than there were jobs. It was from this reserve list that substitutes could be found to replace absent students. This substituting had to be attended to the first thing in the morning to be sure that the substitute was free for the afternoon and that he had work clothes. Sometimes it was necessary to take the substitute home to get work clothes. Securing substitutes was a very important phase of the program, because all crews were needed at full strength for the job at hand, and a shortage of help might mean the loss of a part of the crop.

Friday afternoon was spent in another inspection tour, this time with a newspaper photographer. Eight good action shots appeared in the paper, along with a good story, as a result of this trip.

Every school day during the period, the Vocational Agriculture Instructor checked the crews out from school at 12:30 P.M. In so doing, he was able to see who were the regular workers and where they were going. At least once a week visits were made to the farms for a check-up with the employers. This

check-up was for the purpose of getting their complaints, if any, and their suggestions for a more harmonious program. One farmer wanted to exchange a boy for one who could climb a ladder. This change was made. Movies of students at work on various types of jobs were taken for a permanent record of the program. It was the function of the Instructor on these visits to observe whether or not workers and employers were in harmony.

In some instances it was necessary to point out to employers that most of the workers were entirely "green" and had to be treated as "green" workers. That is, they should work them only four hours, expect some mistakes, and expect to have to show them how to do the job and then check on them later. In the case of the silo-filling crew, it was necessary to show them the correct way of handing up the corn and piling it on the truck, and then check on these points frequently. In almost all cases it was necessary to assume that every worker had to start from scratch and then be instructed and checked on his work.

In one case, the employer did not seem to accept the situation, and instead, let a portion of the crop remain in the field. This particular person was known by the Instructor to be somewhat of a taskmaster and a difficult person to please, but it seemed unwise, at the time of the survey, not to contact this grower. When this grower was questioned as to the supply of help, it was quickly admitted that a shortage of help existed and that help was needed. When, on second contact, the proposed plan was explained and its accompanying requisites of transportation, wages and hours were mentioned, some doubt was voiced as to the need of help, but an order was given for five boys. Only boys were acceptable in this case; girls were not allowed on the farm as workers. With reluctance the farmer agreed to send the truck for the boys. After four days of operation this grower decided to abandon this type of help. This is the only one of fourteen cooperators

that was unable to or did not make satisfactory use of the boys. (If this case had worked out well, it would have been a surprise to the Instructor.) On the report sent in at the end of the program, this grower made the remark that "the boys just weren't suited to that type of work."

On one or two occasions, a suggestion was made by the Instructor which made the program move a little more smoothly. For example, a market gardener who had thirty-eight girls picking beans was paying them by the hour, and he found out, and so did the girls, that some girls picked more beans than others but were receiving the same money. The Instructor suggested to the employer that the pickers be put on a piece work basis. This was done, and everyone was better satisfied. Also, in this matter of good working relations between employer and worker, the services of certain teachers were engaged while in school for the purpose of listening to conversations between students while waiting for class to begin, or in corridors, or after school. By this "grape vine" method, certain small irregularities were discovered and soon straightened out. For example, one group of bean pickers getting 50 cents per bushel for picking, heard that another group of bean pickers was getting 75 cents per bushel. To the complainers it was pointed out by the Instructor that the 75 cents per bushel group was working on a piece that had been picked over once, while the 50 cents per bushel group was on a first picking. This cleared up the supposed inequality in pay.

The general student work program continued as long as a large percentage of employers still required help. The Instructor-checked out all workers each day. When it was noticed that the number going to work had decreased to about thirty, the high school program was returned to normal, though a number of students continued to work after the regular closing time of the school (1:45 P.M.). The employers were notified of the proposed change-back and made arrangements with the workers to pick them up after the regular closing hour.

Reporting on
student work

After students had returned to the regular school program, the Vocational Agriculture Instructor sent a letter to all employers (14) asking them for a summary of the student work done. This summary was to be returned on a self-addressed postal card, run off on a duplicating machine by the High School Commercial Department, with the questions set up in simple form to get the information which the school authorities desired. The questions asked on this card are shown in the Form below.

Form 3 - Employer's Report

1.	Largest number of pupils employed at one time.....
2.	Total number of hours worked by all pupils during the employment period.....
3.	Approximate number of bushels or acres of products harvested.....
4.	Approximate amount of money earned by workers.....
5.	Remarks:.....

Phone calls to only two or three were necessary in order to get back replies from all employers.

On Form 4 shown below, students who worked on farms were asked to turn in a report of their activities. One hundred twenty-one reports were received from students working on farms, which represented about 95% of those students who worked. They were not told in advance why the reports were to be turned in, but the idea in mind was to devise some scheme for using their work experience as a basis for graduation credit.

Form 4 - Student Harvest-Work Summary

Name of Farm or Farms Worked On	Total Hours Worked at Each	Amount of Money Earned

Plan for school credit After the reports were in, the Vocational Agriculture Instructor proposed to the Principal and the Superintendent, and had accepted with minor changes, a plan to give graduation credit to students who worked during this period. Shown in Form 5 is the proposed division of credits based on the actual number of hours worked by students as tabulated from the reports submitted.

Form 5 - Division of Credits

Suggested Credit Set-up (Harvest Workers) by H. F. Bartlett

On a 12-Month Basis

A 700 hr. year (as in Voc. Agric. for Freshmen = 5 credits (graduation)

1 mo. or 60 hr. = 1/2 credit. 63 pupils will get 1/2 credit toward grad.

No. Hrs. Worked	Less than 35 hr.	35-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90-99	100
No. of Pupils	27	31	27	10	11	4	11
Credit Given	1/8 cr.	1/4 cr.	1/2 cr.				

(121 Reports Submitted)

After the reports had been received and the graduation credit plan worked out, it was presented to the student body and accepted by them in a favorable manner, with the expectation that further credits could be secured in future work programs.

Motion picture made The moving pictures that were made by the Instructor while on various visits to farms were titled, put in the proper sequence, and included a summary of the figures submitted by the employers.

Final report to School and State A written report of the program, Form 6, was submitted to the School Committee, the Advisory Committee Members of the Vocational Agriculture Department, and to the State Supervisor of the Vocational Agriculture Education.

Form 6 - Harvest-Work Summary

The period covered by the special Harvest-Work Program was from September 17 to October 9, 1942, inclusive. A number of students continued to work on farms after classes had been returned to the regular schedule. A few were still working December 4.

The largest number of student workers on farms during the period, as tabulated from employer reports, was 121. Besides these, there were some, about 15, who were working on farms where no extras were needed. This made the total number of High School students working on farms, 136.

Following is a list of jobs completed by student workers:

282 bu. field corn husked	2,148 bu. peppers harvested
12 tons winter squash harvested	153 bu. eggplant harvested
10 tons winter squash dipped in formaldehyde solution	74 crates cauliflower harvested
35 acres silage corn harvested	8 acres spinach weeded
4,596 bu. apples picked, packed	320 bu. cabbage harvested
598 bu. snap beans picked	589 bu. green tomatoes harvested
675 bu. potatoes picked and stored	3 acres strawberry plants weeded
400 crates lettuce harvested	7 tons cider apples picked up
150 bu. summer squash harvested	6,500 cauliflower tied for bleaching

Money paid to workers, as reported by employers, amounted to \$1,635.65 for 5,609 hours, or an average wage of 29.1 cents per hour.

Throughout the entire program, more girls than boys were working. It appeared that girls did most of the jobs at hand except filling silo, picking up potatoes, particularly handling full baskets and bags, and moving apple picking ladders. All other jobs they did equally as well as the boys.

Favorable
Comment

In general, the Student Harvest-Work Program at West

Springfield High School was quite successful. Public, civic, student, and parental response was generally very good, and if the need of another program arises, no doubt another student work program can be executed with an equal degree of success.

Following are some letters received by the Instructor, which express some of the thoughts of an employer, three students, two teachers, and a worker's mother:

Letter from Ray Brown, employer, market gardener.....	Page.15
Letter from Edward Wright, student, Junior, no farm experience.....	Page 16
Letter from Florence Scannell, student, Junior, no farm experience, but a 3rd year 4-H member.....	Page 17
Letter from Therese Guertin, student, Sophomore, no farm experience.....	Page 18
Letter from Leo G. Cummings, High School science teacher.....	Page 19
Letter from Paul E. Wiggin, shop mathematics teacher, band instructor in High School.....	Page 20
Letter from Emily Grimmeisen, mother of a Sophomore girl who had no work experience.....	Page 21

West Springfield, Mass.
March 6, 1943

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

We employed about forty high school girls last fall picking beans, weeding, and working in the farm cannery. They were girls who had never done work of that kind before.

Naturally being young girls they did considerable fooling, but they got the work done.

They picked several hundred bushel of beans that otherwise would have stayed in the field. It cost somewhat more to pick them, but we received a high price for the beans.

They weeded about two acres of strawberries that had grown to weeds a foot or more tall, due to lack of labor. If these strawberries hadn't been weeded, they would have been in very poor condition for next spring.

They were considerable help in the cannery.

I would consider the operation as a whole very successful.

Very truly yours,

Ray Brown

C O P Y

March 11, 1943

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

I am writing this letter to tell you how much I appreciate your efforts in the Harvest labor shortage this last fall.

The opportunity of working on a farm was of as much value to me as to the farmer.

The farm I worked on was "Fruit Acres Farm". The job helped me to know better the problems of the farmer. I also learned something about apples from picking to packing.

The work made me more responsible and made me able to co-operate with others. The money I got was a factor also. It was the chance of really earning and working for my own money, in addition to helping the farmer, that made this job mean so much to me.

Yours truly,

Edward Wright

C O P Y

March 11, 1943

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

I am writing this letter to you, stating my views on the harvesting of the crops that the pupils did during September, October and November.

First of all, I wish to say that I never enjoyed anything so much as I did working on the farms during these months. After the twelve-thirty bell rang, all the volunteers assembled in front of the school to be assigned to the different trucks that came after the pupils. Everyone enjoyed this way of going to the farms, I'm sure, even though we did present quite a spectacle in the back of the truck, singing merrily. For the first few weeks on the farm I was assigned to pick beans. Even though many of us dreamed of string beans, we had a lot of fun while picking them. Then, too, since it was only the second month of school, we all became more acquainted each day. The only thing that was widely complained about was that it was quite monotonous picking string beans.

Soon, however, we began pulling weeds for a few days. Still later we picked lima beans, spinach, parsnips and radishes. Then after about six weeks things began to disappear so fast there was not much left to do. To begin with, there were about 40 girls, but by November there were only about 10 girls who still went up to the farm. These girls worked in the cannery mostly. I liked it especially because I knew a lot about canning because I took it up in 4-H for about three years. I've canned great quantities of green tomato pickle, and relish, chili sauce, besides beets, carrots and cauliflower. We canned apple sauce and squash.

I am sure we all benefited from this experience and learned the great need there was for our help and I am sure no one was seriously hurt or anything of the sort. We all realize now all the work which goes into picking vegetables and canning them for us to eat. I guess most of us never realized before how lucky we are and how fortunate we are to be able to get these products.

I feel quite certain that there will be many volunteers for spring planting. I know myself I can hardly wait for the time to come. I, like many others, who, because of age, can't work in war factories, am very glad and only too willing to do what I can to help in this situation by working on the farm.

Very truly yours,

Florence Scannell

C O P Y

March 12, 1943

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

The reason for my writing to you is about the harvest work last fall. I don't know exactly why I wanted to work on a farm. I think it was because it was something new and everybody else was going to do it. Afterwards, of course, I realized that it was something really important for the war effort.

The people that worked with me didn't make me feel that I was unskilled and out of place, which I really was; they made me feel as though I was one of them, and any mistakes I made were quickly forgotten.

This spring I hope to be working there again, if I can be of any help. The work may be hard at times, but one is out of doors all the time and getting plenty of exercise.

I also enjoyed the moving pictures you took of us at work.

Sincerely yours,

Therese Guertin

C O P Y

Science Department
West Springfield High School
March 8, 1943

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

The agricultural project carried on by the West Springfield High School this last autumn was one of the most successful high school projects I have ever seen completed in my many years of teaching.

Perhaps the success may have been due to War Times. I do not know, but it certainly was successful in every way.

It was pleasing to the teachers to see the enthusiasm shown by students. I will never forget the colorful picture of the volunteer farmers assembling on the lawn of the High School, while waiting for trucks to take them to the gardens and orchards.

It was surprising to find the "stick-to-it-iveness" that developed. Workers reported day after day in spite of sore muscles. The girls acted like "Junior Leaguers". One young lady, a neighbor, had received good pay all summer in a defense plant office; yet she reported every afternoon to gather vegetables at 30 cents per hour without a protest.

I have heard students say that they obtained their best grades while they were working, that they did not have time to start idling.

Then there is the very material side. Valuable food products were gathered that otherwise would have rotted in the fields. I can see now the several acres of fine carrots belonging to "Farmer Smart", who wouldn't use "silly high school kids". The carrots are still in the ground.

Thousands of bushels of apples in my home town in Connecticut were never picked. It was too late when the authorities thought of using high school students' nimble and capable hands.

I am glad to have witnessed a small portion of your very successful agricultural project.

Very truly yours,

Leo G. Cummings

C O P Y

March 10, 1943

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

There may be a question in the minds of some people concerning the wisdom of cutting short our class periods and excusing the young students earlier in the school day that they may be employed on various near-by farms and gardens. I felt you might be interested in my opinion concerning this stream-lined program; thus I, a teacher of mathematics in the high school am reporting to you.

At the close of our shortened periods last fall I made a comparison with my plan book of the amount of work covered with that of the preceding year, and it was surprising to note that all classes under the shortened period had covered practically the same ground, and that the "distribution curve" of marks compared very favorable with that of the preceding year.

I firmly believe that by careful planning and by speeding up the class room procedure and by requiring more outside studying and preparation that our subjects in high school in these war days can be, in times of emergency such as we faced last fall, speeded up or stream-lined, so to speak, to the extent that the required amount of work may be covered during a shortened period.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul E. Wiggin

C O P Y

83 Upper Beverly Hills
West Springfield, Mass.
March 10, 1943

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

You, having been instrumental in starting the high school boys and girls in farm work last fall, may be interested to hear from the mother of a fifteen year old girl who worked at Brown's in West Springfield. Those weeks of weeding, picking vegetables and canning were beneficial to her in more ways than one. Physically she gained in appearance, acquiring a good healthy tan and a clear complexion. Her appetite which was never very good, improved so that she ate anything and everything that was put before her. She learned a great deal and showed increasing interest in the small garden at home, and every evening told of some new experience such as preparing corn for canning. She learned the value of a dollar and gained in the realization that it takes hard work to earn money. When she bought a dress, she spoke in terms of the number of weeks she had worked to earn the money for it, and her clothes have been treated with a great deal of consideration since that time.

I wonder if you have ever thought of this fact which I am about to mention - the fact that most teen-age girls resent nothing so much as being called "children". From the first day that Shirley began to work on a farm, she felt that she was of some use, being needed to do some important work. I believe it bolsters up a youngster's morale to realize that her job carries with it a certain responsibility, and she has pride in doing the job well. This sense of responsibility cannot help but have a lasting effect and adds to stability of purpose. It seems to me that the best thing that could have happened to the boys and girls last year, was the opportunity to work on farms, proving that they can be useful in their way, and are needed in important work, as much as their older brothers in theirs.

Should there be farm work available for the high school pupils during 1943, Shirley will be on hand to apply for it.

Sincerely yours,

Emily Grimmeisen

C O P Y

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SETTING UP AND OPERATING A STUDENT HARVEST-WORK
PROGRAM IN HIGH SCHOOL

It is important that:

1. There be a definite need of and demand for a student help program.
2. The coordinator be the right type of man for the job.
3. The superintendent of schools and the principal of the high school be in favor of such a program and that the coordinator in charge of the program be given the necessary amount of time and facilities to do the job right.
4. The coordinator keep in close touch with employers and students to iron out any difficulties that may arise.
5. Students be encouraged to keep a record of work done.
6. Whenever possible, academic teachers be encouraged to make visits to farms so that they might tie in work experience with academic teaching.
7. Adequate publicity of the right sort be given the program.
8. A check be made with prospective employers to determine the specific jobs with which the prospective worker should be made familiar by actual participation prior to employment. Such experience would be obtained in a short unit of instruction in cooperation with farmers in the community who would allow their facilities to be used for such training. For the prospective workers to be on farms where the farm owner intends to give the specific skill training, a short unit course should be organized to present them with
 - a. the background of the need for farm workers
 - b. the attitude necessary toward the work
 - c. the conditions under which they will work
 - d. the hazards they must avoid
9. The coordinator make an effort to have the employers organize work so that it can be put on a piece work basis, if possible, and that an attempt be made to have all workers in the program receive about the same wage for the same kind of work. Even small differences in wage scales and rates are quickly discovered by students, and this forms a basis for dissatisfaction.
10. Employers be made to realize that the majority of the workers are green and inexperienced and an emergency type of help and that they be dealt with on that basis.

AFTER ONE YEAR - STUDY OF FAILURES AND DIFFICULTIES

After a fall and spring experience in operating the Student Labor Program, it was thought desirable as a finishing touch to this study to find where the failures and difficulties had appeared in organization and operation. In order that this check should be comprehensive it must include employer, worker, and supervisor or coordinator. To that end a questionnaire was prepared and submitted to a group of representative employers. Workers and coordinators were questioned by the Instructor in charge of the program. The following is a summary of the material gathered and is offered in sections corresponding to the three sides of the Harvest-Work Program -- The Employers, the Workers, and the Labor Coordinators.

A. SPECIFIC FAILURES BY EMPLOYERS IN ORGANIZATION OF THEIR WORK

Failure to:

1. Have truck on time to get workers when they are dismissed from school; be sure workers know if the truck will be late.

If the truck is there waiting, there is small chance for the worker to decide not to go to work. If he has to stand around waiting, several may decide, collectively, that they would rather not go to work. If the truck is to be late, have it arrive when it is expected.

2. Check each day, if necessary, to discover any dissatisfaction on the part of the workers. This can best be done on an individual basis rather than in a group. By asking an individual, the "mob psychology" element is removed. If any grievance is

found, right then is the time to get it straightened out.

3. Get the name, address and 'phone number of workers.

If the employer has the name, address and 'phone number of each worker, he has a better chance to make contact with his workers. This also relieves the co-ordinator of the necessity of locating workers on the employer's list of workers when they are wanted on Saturday or some non-school day.

4. To plan ahead and notify the local Farm Labor Co-ordinator far enough in advance so that he can get a crew ready. Many farmers, especially Market Gardeners, need a large crew on short notice. This situation can be taken care of once in a while. Generally, however, it is best for the co-ordinator to have notice of the need a day in advance. This allows him to look over the list of available workers, get in touch with them, find out if they will be available the next day, have them let their parents know they are to work the next day, bring work clothes and extra lunch the day they are to work. The co-ordinator should be notified the morning of the day before the workers are needed.

This gives him time to get a crew together.

5. Have constant adult supervision of the right kind. All of the co-operators that were questioned agreed that a capable adult made the best overseer and that he or she should be on hand all the time. From them it appears that about 10-12 workers are all that can be supervised well by one overseer. The overseer should be with the crew the first day and right then he should make it known what is to be expected of each worker. Very

important it is to get the group started right. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. This overseer must understand kids and like them.

6. Have a satisfactory check on piece work turned in by workers.

The survey indicated that one cause for dissatisfaction was the system used by the employer to keep account of the units or pieces turned in by each worker, when the work is on a piece-work basis. If there isn't a definite and rigid system of checking, there may be thievery by some workers or mistakes by the checker. Whatever system is used, it should be explained to the workers the first time they go to the field. At the close of each day's operation the checker and the workers should take time to be sure that all pieces are accounted for and everything is satisfactory. If this is left until the next day, there may be a chance for an argument.

7. To start workers to work immediately upon arrival at the farm.

Get the workers in the habit of going to work immediately. If they stop at the barn for a drink etc., they get in the habit of fooling away some time and then it is harder to get them going on the job. It is the employer's business to have tools, containers, etc. in the field all ready to go when the workers arrive. Also, know which rows are to be worked on; don't stop to decide where to start in. This may require advance preparation by the employer.

8. To set up simple standards for a day's work. If possible, have

the group agree upon how much should be accomplished each day

and then hold them to it. If the goal is reached, be sure to make mention of it in a worthy manner. A word or two of praise will do a great deal toward accomplishing higher standards from time to time. If more than one group is at work on the same kind of job, it is quite easy to have one group compete against the other in the matter of accomplishment.

B. DIFFICULTIES WITH WORKERS ENCOUNTERED BY EMPLOYERS.

1. Individual differences in ability and temperament of workers within a group. It is impossible to assemble a group, large or small, in which all individuals are of the same ability or temperament. THIS FACT MUST BE RECOGNIZED AND DEALT WITH, perhaps more so with young people than with old. Very quickly the overseer should spot these differences and try to do something about them. It might be necessary to separate from the group the one who is the loud talker or the clown. If one seems to be the leader, of the right sort, in a quiet way the overseer might capitalise on this already established leadership.
2. Dislike or refusal of some workers to do a certain kind of work. Sometimes something can be done about this, sometimes not. The employer or overseer must agree with the group that the particular job is unpleasant but that it must be done. He might agree, also, that part of it might be done today and part tomorrow. Further, if the employer or overseer will actually work at the job with the workers and share their trouble, the objection is usually overcome and the job done.
3. Failure of worker to be on the job. This difficulty may be overcome by getting together with the co-ordinator and having him

duck on the offender. Both the employer and the co-ordinator are quick to spot the unreliable ones. The offender may be having some difficulty at the farm, and this can be checked. Frequently such people are habitually unreliable, and it may be best to drop them from the worker list.

4. Workers too young to be of much value. This situation, age of workers, will grow worse instead of better due to general labor shortage. The work, hours, standards, pay, overseers must adjust things to this situation.
5. Keeping workers satisfied with wages, even though workers are to blame for the dissatisfaction. Employers must realize and accept the fact that the wage paid for labor at present is out of line with what is usually paid for the same labor in normal times; also, that the dissatisfaction comes, many times, to workers on piece work. This may be because they just can't work, because they will fool around instead of working, or because they may not have been instructed correctly about the job when they first started the job. The employer should check this matter very closely and carefully. Many times the employer is as much at fault as the worker.

C. REASONS WHY SOME WORKERS FAIL AS WORKERS:

1. They are physically unfit because of:

- a. inability to withstand the heat of the sun
- b. an allergy to certain common plants
- c. certain physical disabilities

Some workers try farm work in good faith and just can't do it. Some of them can not stay out in sun. Others are troubled by hay fever, asthma and poison ivy. Try to arrange for an inside

job. Some workers are physically handicapped and just are not suited for the work.

2. Lack of parental support and push to make them work.

One thing the co-ordinator should always check when there is trouble, is the attitude of the workers' parents. Some parents are very much opposed to having their child work on a farm. Sometimes a visit to the farm by the parents is helpful.

3. Wrong attitude of the worker. Occasionally a worker goes to work because one of his gang goes, but he doesn't like it. He can be a trouble maker and should be discovered and either won over or dismissed.

4. Workers don't understand clearly what is expected of them.

This is generally a personal matter where the employer is accustomed to having experienced help and just doesn't want "green kids" around, and makes it evident. The employer must make this adjustment.

5. A very common trait among children is to start off on something before they know what they are to do. Frequently if they are asked whether or not they know how to do something, the answer is in the affirmative. Investigation on the job discloses that very little, if any, of the techniques of the performance of the job is known by the worker. If the employer sends workers on the job on their say-so and then finds the job not going well, it may be the employer's fault for not checking to find out the real ability of the worker. This indicates

that the employer must explain clearly to the worker, IN A WAY WHICH THE WORKER CAN UNDERSTAND, just what the job requires. If the employer is sure that he has explained the job clearly, and then the worker fails, it is probably the fault of the worker.

D. HAZARDS ABOUT WHICH THE LABOR CO-ORDINATOR CAN CAUTION:

1. The workers

- a. Sit on floor of truck when riding.
- b. Keep away from machines and animals.
- c. Expose parts of the body to the sun for short periods when first working.
- d. Keep away from 3-leaved plants under trees and on fence rows.
- e. Drink only water that is furnished you by the employer.
- f. Don't drink ice water if you are very hot and sweaty.
- g. If you get a cut or bruise, have it taken care of at once.
- h. If an object is too heavy for you to lift, have someone help you or leave it alone.

2. The employers

- a. Make workers sit down when riding.
- b. Be sure picking containers, when filled, won't be too heavy for workers.
- c. Insist that no produce nor other objects are thrown by workers at one another at any time.
- d. Have standard working conditions for all workers from the same school; they talk it over.

Approved by:

Rollin H. Barrett

W. S. Welles

Problem Committee

Date May 16, 1944

